

off the lights and go to sleep—and not have to worry about being awakened in the middle of the night to go out and save somebody's life. We are not going to have to be disrupted in our own families or in our own personal lives to go out and lend a hand if there has been an auto accident or a truck accident and put our lives at risk. We are not going to be drawn into a situation with a house on fire.

We had, not too long ago, in Delaware, a situation wherein firefighters literally rushed into a house that was on fire with the feeling that there were people literally in the basement of the house. The floor of the house collapsed, and we lost the lives of several firefighters.

But none of us have to worry about that—making that kind of sacrifice and undertaking those kinds of risks.

None of us will have to worry about being the young woman who was a volunteer firefighter. She worked in the healthcare field, as I recall, and was a volunteer firefighter. She worked late at night and was literally driving home on I-95 in Wilmington. It was when we were doing a reconstruction of I-95 right through the middle of our city.

There was an accident at about 3 or 4 o'clock in the morning, and the volunteer firefighter, the woman, pulled off. She stopped to provide help to those who were impacted. The volunteer firefighter was killed. She was struck by a passing vehicle and lost her life.

None of us have to worry about any of that happening and having to put ourselves or members of our families in that kind of jeopardy.

The reason is that there are literally tens of thousands of people from all corners of this country—all different sizes and colors, men, women, young, and old—who understand that we all have an obligation to serve and look out for other people even when it puts us in danger and at risk with our own lives.

So, in passing this legislation—and it goes to the House of Representatives now; it is not a done deal—our hope is that the House of Representatives will see fit to embrace it and pass it and send it on to the President.

I presume that most Presidents—and I have had the privilege to have known quite a few of them—have great affection for the firefighters in their own States, where they come from. Nobody has greater affection in Delaware than does our President. He and I and Chris Coons, as well as Mike Castle and Pete du Pont, who came before us, share that affection and that high, high regard.

I heard our President, when he was a mere Senator, say that there are actually three political parties in Delaware. One of those is Democrat; one is Republican; and the other is of the folks who are the firefighters and their families. They stand out in the crowd.

I will just close with this.

I have asked people why they are willing to put their lives in danger to

help save our lives and the lives of others who are in jeopardy. I have heard from hundreds of men and women who have said that the reason they do it is that it gives them joy. It gives them joy to know that they are making a difference with their lives and that they are serving other people.

One or two, every now and then, will actually invoke the Golden Rule: to treat other people the way you want to be treated. How would I want to be treated if my house were on fire? How would I want to be treated if my son or my daughter were in a traffic accident? If there were a forest fire surrounding our community, how would I want to be treated? Well, that is the way I would like to be; so why don't I treat other people the same way.

With that, this has been a good week, and we are ending here on a very high note. I want to thank the Presiding Officer for all of his good work. It has been a pleasure working with him this week and every week. To the neighbor right across the Delaware River, I am looking forward to many, many happy trails in the days to come.

We have these young pages who are sitting down here at the foot of the Presiding Officer and the floor staff. I don't know if any of them, when they were little kids, had the desire to be a firefighter. My guess is—actually, some of them are nodding their heads that, yes, they did. Hopefully, we will never outgrow the spirit that compels and encourages people to stand up and play the role of a firefighter whether it is in the middle of the night with a fire or an accident or whatever it might be. Hopefully, their example and that spirit will be contagious and infect all of us in a very, very good way.

With that, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. CARPER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

MORNING BUSINESS

VOTE EXPLANATION

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I was necessarily absent for rollcall vote No. 2, on adoption of the Van Hollen amendment to provide grants fire station construction through the Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency, 85. Had I been present for the vote, I would have voted yea.

24TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE COLUMBINE MASSACRE

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, 24 years ago today, tragedy struck Littleton, CO. It was a day that began like any

other but—in a matter of hours—would scar our Nation forever.

Today, the word “Columbine” is synonymous with an act of terror that every parent fears: school shootings. If you had told me 24 years ago that the scenes we witnessed that morning—students and teachers being shot down, traumatized children being escorted out of classrooms by armed officers, if you told me this would become a common—almost weekly—occurrence in America, I wouldn't have believed you.

But here we are. In the years since Columbine, hundreds of American students have died—or been injured—in school shootings, and thousands more have been traumatized. Gunfire has become the No. 1 cause of death for our Nation's children. And one in five Americans now say they have lost a loved one to gun violence. Some politicians have resigned themselves to the idea that this is just part of American life we must accept. Shame on them. This is a uniquely American crisis—and lawmakers have the power to resolve it.

Yet Republicans in Congress actually want to take steps backwards. We are seeing that in the House right now, where the MAGA majority is trying to wipe off the books a gun law restricting braces that turn pistols into short-barreled rifles. This is the kind of weapon that was carried by the mass shooters in Dayton, OH; Boulder, CO; and just a few weeks ago at a school shooting in Nashville, TN. Parents shouldn't have to worry that, when they send their kids to school, they may not return home. Children shouldn't be forced to live with the fear that their classroom could be the next target.

People of all political stripes are calling on Congress to act. Let's start by keeping assault weapons and short-barreled rifles off of our streets and out of our classrooms.

ARMS SALES NOTIFICATION

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, section 36(b) of the Arms Export Control Act requires that Congress receive prior notification of certain proposed arms sales as defined by that statute. Upon such notification, the Congress has 30 calendar days during which the sale may be reviewed. The provision stipulates that, in the Senate, the notification of proposed sales shall be sent to the chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

In keeping with the committee's intention to see that relevant information is available to the full Senate, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD the notifications which have been received. If the cover letter references a classified annex, then such annex is available to all Senators in the office of the Foreign Relations Committee, room SD-423.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows: